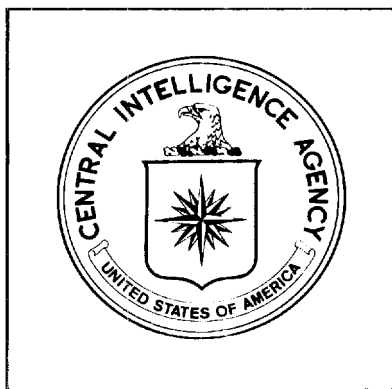


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OCI-0141-75
February 27, 1975

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WESTERN EUROPE – CANADA – INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

This publication is prepared for regional specialists in the Washington community by the Western Europe Division, Office of Current Intelligence, with occasional contributions from other offices within the Directorate of Intelligence. Comments and queries are welcome. They should be directed to the authors of the individual articles.

C O N T E N T S

Finnish Social Democrats Choose Delegates for Party Congress	1
Italian Christian Democratic Leader Fanfani Ousts Party Youth Leaders	2-3
Too Many NATO Committees	4
Portuguese Civilians Present Counterproposals	5-6
<div data-bbox="295 1194 1352 1339" style="border: 1px solid black; height: 69px; width: 651px;"></div>	
Christian Democratic Mayoral Candidate Kidnaped in West Berlin	11-12

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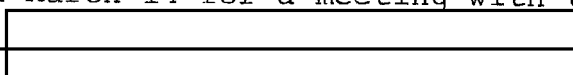
Finnish Social Democrats Choose Delegates for
Party Congress

Moderate and left wing members of the Finnish Social Democratic Party outdistanced the rightists in the selection of delegates to the party congress in June.

The selection of the 360 representatives was more hotly contested than usual because conservatives mounted a major effort to halt what they regard as a swing to the left within the party. Despite rightist efforts, the moderate group within the party, led by Chairman Paasio and Secretary General Sorsa, picked up sizeable gains. The radical left also did well, but probably not well enough to affect party policies and programs.

The most important issue before the June congress is the selection of party leaders. If Paasio steps down, Sorsa--the current Finnish Prime Minister--will probably succeed him. Paasio is afraid, however, that Sorsa may give in to the leftists and select a radical as the party's secretary general. If this seems likely, Paasio may decide not to retire.

The leftist victory will please the Soviets, who think rightist forces in Finland undermine smooth relations between the two countries. The warming trend in Social Democrat-CPSU relations may make things easier for President Kekkonen when he visits the Soviet Union next month. Kekkonen's annual winter hunting trip to the Soviet Union, which usually is combined with talks between Kekkonen and Soviet leaders, was postponed this year, presumably because of Brezhnev's health. Although the dates of Kekkonen's visit have not been made public, US Embassy officials were told that Kekkonen would not be in Finland on March 14 for a meeting with the new US Ambassador.



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Italian Christian Democratic Leader Fanfani Ousts
Party Youth Leaders

1 | Amintore Fanfani, leader of Italy's dominant Christian Democratic Party, abruptly dismissed the leaders of the party youth section this week after they termed him unfit to continue in his position. Young Christian Democrats reportedly retaliated yesterday by occupying party offices in 10 cities and threatening not to leave until Fanfani stepped down.

3 | The youth organization has been critical of Fanfani for giving the party a conservative image at a time when it appears that voters are in a mood for change. Fanfani is leading the party into nationwide local elections this spring on a shopworn platform that calls for tougher law-and-order measures, criticizes Socialist demands for more governmental influence, and rules out closer relations with the Communist opposition.

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2 | Young Christian Democrats may also suspect Fanfani of trying to stall parliamentary approval of a bill lowering the voting age from 21 years to 18. Fanfani thinks the change would make is more difficult to hold Christian Democratic losses to a minimum in the coming elections.

1 | A majority of senior Christian Democratic leaders voted to support Fanfani's ouster of the youth leadership. However, left-wing factions, representing about 20 percent of the senior leadership, contested the move. There were signs that the more moderate left and center leaders who back Fanfani are also embarrassed by the incident. A spokesman for the largest centrist faction regretted that the party had reached the point of imposing "management by commissar" on the youth section. Prime Minister Moro--the party's most influential left-of-center leader--has generally supported Fanfani, but he indicated his distaste for the ouster by abstaining in the vote.

February 27, 1975

-2-

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The Christian Democratic left cannot mount an effective challenge to Fanfani unless Moro joins them outright. Moro is not likely to do that now, because he thinks that a leadership battle could jeopardize his government and possibly interfere with the local elections that are scheduled to be held in June.

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February 27, 1975

-3-

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Too Many NATO Committees

NATO is about to take up a problem that plagues all political organizations, especially international ones--the proliferation of committees.

The NATO defense ministers last December, at the initiative of the West Germans, decided that the Defense Planning Committee should begin to take a hard look at the committees in its structure with a view to eliminating a number of them. The US is now suggesting that the proliferation of committees is a NATO-wide problem, also affecting the committees that come under the North Atlantic Council.

The US Mission has collected a number of interesting statistics to support its case. The NAC and the DPC have more than 370 committees, subcommittees, working groups, and ad hoc groups, and their numbers are growing at an alarming rate. During the last 18 months, for example, 68 new groups were formed, but only 27 were disbanded. The Mission has taken a close look at 125 of the 370 groups and has found eight to be inactive and nine worthless.

At an informal meeting this week, Deputy Secretary General Pansa said that the NATO International Staff was powerless to do away with committees and subcommittees. On several recent occasions, he added, the number of meetings scheduled was greater than the number of meeting rooms available at NATO headquarters. As a result, some meetings had to be held elsewhere, at greatly added expense.

Pansa agreed to schedule a meeting of the Defense Planning Committee soon to discuss the problem.

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Portuguese Civilians Present Counterproposals

Representatives of the center-left Popular Democratic Party are scheduled to meet with Armed Forces Movement members today to present counterproposals to the Movement's program formalizing its role in the government.

According to a Popular Democratic Party member, the party's counterproposal contains "about ten percent of what the Armed Forces Movement is seeking." The Popular Democrats plan to put up a strong fight to tone down the power the program allots to the Movement, but the party will not leave the government even if it is forced to accept the entire package. Many party members will be disgruntled by what they regard as a surrender to intolerable conditions, but party leaders fear that if they refuse to comply, the Movement will not permit them to run candidates in the election.

Twelve parties have presented the necessary 5,000 signatures to register for the elections. Ten of the qualified parties fall to the left of center and all but three of these are either communist, communist-dominated, or representative of the extreme left-wing fringe.

The two center-right parties--the Social Democratic Center and the Christian Democrats--have been subjected to systematic harassment and violent attacks from the far left. Press reports announced today that these two parties have formed a coalition called the Union of the Center and Christian Democracy, and will present joint lists of candidates for elections. Although the Christian Democrats have avoided any association with the Social Democratic Center until now, the attack on a Christian Democratic rally by leftists earlier this week may have helped change their mind. Similar attacks have recently been directed at the center-left Popular Democrats.

February 27, 1975

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Partial responsibility for the violence has been linked to a revolutionary action group, the League for Unity and Revolutionary Action. After its first congress last weekend, a group spokesman indicated that the group will not participate in elections, but will work towards fomenting social revolution. Their tactics will probably include the continued harassment of moderate parties. Unless the government begins to provide adequate security, the election campaign next month will be a shambles.

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February 27, 1975

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Christian Democratic Mayoral Candidate
Kidnaped in West Berlin

The campaign for the West Berlin state elections on Sunday has been thrown into turmoil following the kidnaping early yesterday of Peter Lorenz, the opposition Christian Democrats' candidate for Governing Mayor. Lorenz' party colleagues may request that the elections be postponed.

Until the kidnaping, the incumbent Social Democrats, who won a slim majority in the elections four years ago, hoped to sustain only minor losses and to form a coalition with the small Free Democratic party to stay in power. The Christian Democrats had expected to profit from their strong stand on law-and-order issues, in addition to which they may receive a sizable sympathy vote that could boost their share of the vote over the 45% level.

The group responsible for Lorenz' abduction has not been identified, but there is some suspicion that it is the work of remnants of the notorious Baader-Meinhof gang. The imprisoned leaders of this group go on trial in Stuttgart on May 21, and West German security authorities have expected that an effort would be made to liberate the prisoners.

Lorenz' kidnaping is the second act of politically-motivated violence that has occurred in West Berlin in recent months. Last December, the chief judge of the city's supreme court was assassinated. The Red Army Faction--a collection of local terrorist groups--claimed responsibility but local police have had little success in solving the case.

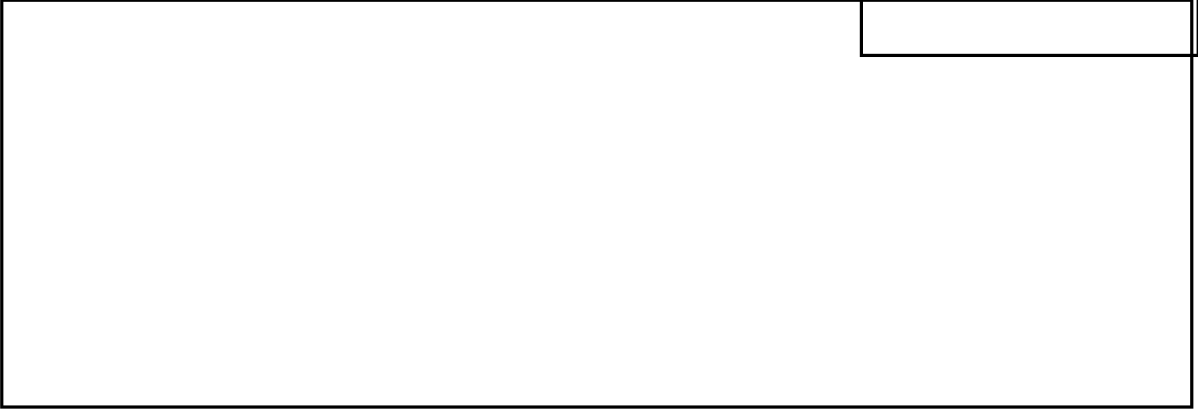
February 27, 1975

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Immediately following Lorenz' disappearance, local political leaders led by the incumbent Social Democratic Mayor Klaus Schuetz met with officials from Bonn, including Interior Minister Maihofer and Foreign Minister Genscher. Security forces are conducting intensive searches at autobahn check points, and presumably have tightened security at the city's two airports to prevent a hijacking. The East German security forces are assisting in the massive manhunt.



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February 27, 1975

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